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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/054,349	01/18/2002	Michael Odell	FORSAL-33	7089

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LATHROP & CLARK LLP
740 REGENT STREET SUITE 400
P.O. BOX 1507
MADISON, WI 537011507

EXAMINER

HASTINGS, KAREN M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1731

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DATE MAILED: 02/20/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/054349

Applicant(s)

Odell

Examiner

HASTINGS

Group Art Unit

1731

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Status

- ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 3/2002
- ☐ This action is **FINAL**.
- ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- ☒ Claim(s) 1 - ~~1~~ 21 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- ☒ Claim(s) 1 - ~~1~~ 21 is/are rejected.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

- ☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
- ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.
- ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- ☒ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been received.
- ☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.
- ☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 1.7.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). 4
- ☒ Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- ☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- ☐ Other _____

Office Action Summary

Art Unit 1731

Claims 1-7 and 15-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1 line 6 in order to be more clear "which" should be --said at least one-- before "dewatering box". Furthermore on lines 7 and 8 it is confusing to recite both that every second zone has a vacuum, and every second zone is vacuum free. It really is alternating zones. It is suggested that the claim be amended to define alternating zones of vacuum and vacuum free. Also, in claim 1 lines 9 and 10, "a vacuum free zone" should be --one of the vacuum-free zone(s)-- and "a vacuum zone" should be --one of the vacuum zone(s)--.

In claim 15 line 15, "vacuum zones" should be --vacuum-free zones-- in order for the claim to be consistent with the specification and Figures as to the scope of this invention. This appears to be an inadvertent error in claim 15.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary

Art Unit 1731

skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meinecke et al. '600 or Buck et al. '206, each in view of Calehuff et al.

Meinecke et al. '600 at Figure 2 shows a twin wire former with two separate suction boxes with a deflector/loading blade 29 located opposite same and against a suction free zone in between the suction boxes. Likewise, Buck et al. at Figure 4 shows a suction box 16, another suction box 16A and an intervening loading blade 50 located opposite a vacuum free zone. However in each reference the vacuum free zone is not an integral part of a suction box.

However it is well known in the art as exemplified by Calehuff et al. to have an integrated, partitioned, suction box wherein alternating chambers are attached to vacuum and alternate chambers may be atmospheric. See column 4 line 70 to column 5 line 3. Thus it would have been within the level of ordinary skill in the art to integrate the suction boxes 16, 16A of Figure 4 of Buck et al. for example into a single partitioned suction box since such is a known mechanical expedient for constructing a partitioned suction box in a papermaking former as exemplified in Calehuff.

Art Unit 1731

All dependent claims are shown or suggested by the references or are known technical features to one of ordinary skill in the art. For example, the use of a curved or straight path is a well known choice to one of ordinary skill in the art; it is also well known to increase the vacuum as the dewatering progresses along the path of web travel.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

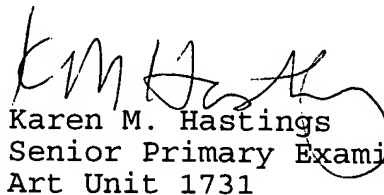
Arledter shows in Figure 1 alternating pressure exerted at dewatering boxes 5 versus alternating suction at dewatering boxes 6 in a twin wire former.

WO '467 in Figure 1 shows in a twin wire former alternate loading blades 3 alternately arranged with suction deflector blades at 6.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Hastings whose telephone number is (703) 308-0470. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 6:30 A.M. to 5 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Steve Griffin, can be reached on (703) 308-1164. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 305-7115.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0651.


Karen M. Hastings
Senior Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1731

2/2003